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Sir:

Transmitted herewith for filing is the Patent Application of:

Inventors: Yuri Markevitch, Mark C. McMaster and Yu-en Percy Chang

For: **APPARATUS AND METHOD FOR PRECISE LAPPING OF RECESSED AND  
PROTRUDING ELEMENTS IN A WORKPLACE**

Enclosed are:

- ☒ Patent Specification and Declaration
- ☒ 3 sheets of drawing(s).
- ☒ An assignment of the invention to International Business Machines Corporation (includes Recordation Form Cover Sheet).
- ☐ A certified copy of a \_\_\_\_\_ application.
- ☒ Information Disclosure Statement, PTO 1449 and copies of references.

The filing fee has been calculated as shown below:

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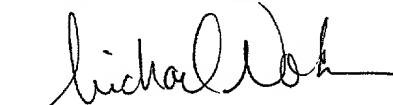
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APPARATUS AND METHOD FOR PRECISE LAPPING OF RECESSED  
AND PROTRUDING ELEMENTS IN A WORKPIECE

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Technical Field:

The present invention relates in general to lapping workpieces, and in particular to improving the precision of a lapping process for magnetic transducers. Still more particularly, the present invention relates to a precisely controlling lapping of a workpiece having an element that is recessed in or protruding from the lapped surface of the air bearing surfaces of magnetic transducers.

2. Description of the Prior Art:

Magnetic recording is employed for large memory capacity requirements in high speed data processing systems. For example, in magnetic disc drive systems, data is read from and written to magnetic recording media utilizing magnetic transducers commonly referred to as magnetic heads. Typically, one or more magnetic recording discs are mounted on a spindle such that the disc can rotate to permit the magnetic head mounted on a moveable arm in position closely adjacent to the disc surface to read or write information thereon.

During operation of the disc drive system, an actuator mechanism moves the magnetic transducer to a desired radial position on the surface of the rotating disc where the head

electromagnetically reads or writes data. Usually the head is integrally mounted in a carrier or support referred to as a "slider." A slider generally serves to mechanically support the head and any electrical connections between the head and the rest of the disc drive system. The slider is aerodynamically shaped to slide over moving air and therefore to maintain a uniform distance from the surface of the rotating disc thereby preventing the head from undesirably contacting the disc.

Typically, a slider is formed with two parallel rails having a recessed area between the rails and with each rail having a ramp at one end. The surface of each rail that glides over the disc surface during operation is known as the air bearing surface. Large numbers of sliders are fabricated from a single wafer having rows of the magnetic transducers deposited simultaneously on the wafer surface using semiconductor-type process methods. After deposition of the heads is complete, single-row bars 11 (see **Figure 1**) are sliced from the wafer, each bar comprising a row of units which can be further processed into sliders having one or more magnetic transducers on their end faces. Each row bar is bonded to a fixture or tool where the bar is processed and then further diced, i.e., separated into sliders having one or more magnetic transducers on their end faces.

The slider head is typically an inductive electromagnetic device including magnetic pole pieces which read the data from or write the data onto the recording media surface. In other applications the magnetic head may

include a magneto resistive read element for separately reading the recorded data with the inductive heads serving only to write the data. In either application, the various elements terminate on the air bearing surface and function to electromagnetically interact with the data contained on the magnetic recording disc. In order to achieve maximum efficiency from the magnetic heads, the sensing elements must have precision dimensional relationships to each other as well as the application of the slider air bearing surface to the magnetic recording disc. During manufacturing, it is most critical to grind or lap these elements to very close tolerances of desired thickness in order to achieve the unimpaired functionality required of sliders.

Conventional lapping processes utilize either oscillatory or rotary motion of the workpiece across either a rotating or oscillating lapping plate 13 (**Figure 1**) to provide a random motion of the workpiece 11 over lapping plate 13 and randomize plate imperfections across the head surface in the course of lapping. During the lapping process, the motion 15 of abrasive particles 17 (**Figures 2 and 3**) carried on the surface of the lapping plate 13 is typically transverse to or across the magnetic head elements 19 exposed at the slider air bearing surface 21. In magnetic head applications, the electrically active components 19 exposed at the air bearing surface are made of relatively softer, ductile materials. These electrically active components during lapping can scratch and smear into the other components causing electrical shorts and degraded head performance. The prior art

lapping processes cause different materials exposed at the slider air bearing surface 21 to lap to different depths (Figure 4), resulting in recession or protrusion of the critical head elements 19 relative to the air bearing surface 21. As a result, poor head performance because of increase space in between the critical elements and the recording disc can occur.

Rotating lapping plates having horizontal lapping surfaces in which abrasive particles such as diamond fragments are embedded have been used for lapping and polishing purposes in the high precision lapping of magnetic transducing heads. Generally in these lapping processes, an abrasive slurry utilizing a liquid carrier containing diamond fragments or other abrasive particles is applied to the lapping surface as the lapping plate is rotated relative to the slider or sliders maintained against the lapping surface. Common practice is to periodically refurbish the lapping plate with a lapping abrasion to produce a surface texture suitable for the embedding and retention of the appropriate size of diamond abrasive being used with the lapping process. One of several problems experienced is that the surface is susceptible to rapid change in smoothness as it is used to lap a workpiece during lapping. A change in smoothness effects the hydrodynamic bearing film provided by the liquid component of the abrasive slurry creating a hydroplaning effect which raises the workpiece from the lapping surface to diminish the abrasion action of the particles and substantially increases abrasion time required.

5 The general idea of interrupting the lapping surface, for example, by forming grooves in the lapping plate is known in the art. Further, material has been used in the troughs so that unspent abrasive liquid is maintained adjacent to the working surface of the lapping plate while spent abrasive fluid is centrifugally removed beyond the lap plate peripheral. In other applications, the grooves are formed between working surface area in which an abrasive such as diamond particles are embedded in a metallic coat.

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15 Problems exist with grooved plates such as excessive width and/or depth of the grooves to allow abrasive particles to lose their effectiveness due to lack of contact with a workpiece. Grooves that are too wide provide surface discontinuity too severe for small work pieces. Forming such grooves is costly and time consuming. Even if the grooves can be sized properly. Substantial segments of the lapping surface remain ungrooved, or alternatively a prohibitively large number of grooves are required. Surface uniformity on a micropore scale suitable for lapping smaller pieces has been achieved only with extreme care. Refurbishment of such sensitive grooving on a lapping surface required renewal of the precision grooves can be time consuming and expensive. Therefore it can be seen that there is a need for precise conditioning and texturing of the plate surfaces of lapping plates in order to maintain surface flatness, waviness, and microprofile of the grooves in the lapping (polishing) plate. It can also be seen that there is a need for machine conditioning of lapping plates with such conditioning and texturing so as to extend the life of lapping plates. In addition, there

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is a need for enhanced quality of plate surfaces to yield better quality, scratch-free air bearing surfaces or other surfaces which require soft material lapping having a uniformly textured lapping surface amenable to repeat refurbishment.

[illegible]

## SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention provides a lapping method utilizing textured and conditioned lapping plates which are most suitable for finishing magnetic heads resulting in improved surface quality less sensitivity to electrical shorts due to smears and reduced surface height difference (recession) between the head elements exposed at the slider air bearing surface. The lapping process can proceed in a succession of steps or phases in which a rough lapping phase using a diamond slurry is followed by a second phase or polishing phase that maintains the same mechanical motion between the work piece and lapping plate but utilizes only the lapping plate without abrasives of any kind to polish the work piece surface, and to clean up any deep textured marks resulting from the diamond slurry phase. During the lapping and polishing phases, a conductive liquid such as ethylene glycol is utilized to provide lubrication and to minimize any buildup of static charge. In addition, sodium citrate (e.g., di-tri-carboxylic organic acid salts, oxalate or tartrates) is added to the solvent (e.g., glycol) when lapping sliders. The sodium citrate performs a surfactant function as opposed to the functions utilized in various grinding operations wherein the sodium citrate complexing with alkaline metal hypochlorite to capture silicone particles for passing the silicone particle waste away from silicone grinding. The surfactant function enhances the lubrication by directing the glycols to form into smaller droplets.



The lapping process of the present invention begins with a specifically textured and conditioned lapping plate having no abrasive particles embedded therein or in the slurry. The textured lapping plate grooves lap and polish the ABS surface. Such use of the specifically and controlled grooved lapping plate along with a slurry provides versatility of operation for lapping and polishing of the ABS surfaces and other surfaces which requires soft lapping plate surface materials.

The foregoing and other objects and advantages of the present invention will be apparent to those skilled in the art, in view of the following detailed description of the preferred embodiment of the present invention, taken in conjunction with the appended claims and the accompanying drawings.

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

So that the manner in which the features, advantages and objects of the invention, as well as others which will become apparent, are attained and can be understood in more detail, more particular description of the invention briefly summarized above may be had by reference to the embodiment thereof which is illustrated in the appended drawings, which drawings form a part of this specification. It is to be noted, however, that the drawings illustrate only a preferred embodiment of the invention and is therefore not to be considered limiting of its scope as the invention may admit to other equally effective embodiments.

**Figure 1** is a schematic drawing of a prior art lapping plate and work piece.

**Figure 2** is a schematic side view of a prior art lapping process utilizing abrasives.

**Figure 3** is an enlarged sectional side view of a work piece prior to processing by the prior art process of **Figure 2**.

**Figure 4** is an enlarged sectional side view of the work piece of **Figure 3** after being processed by the prior art process of **Figure 2**.

**Figure 5** is a schematic sectional side view of one embodiment of a magnetic recording disc drive and slider assembly in accordance with the invention.

**Figure 6** is a top view of the disc drive of **Figure 5**.

**Figure 7** is a schematic drawing of a lapping plate in lapping contact with an ABS subject surface in accordance with the invention.

**Figure 8** is an enlarged sectional side view of the lapping plate and ABS of **Figure 7** illustrating grooves in the ABS.

**Figure 9** is a top view of a conditioning ring in rotating contact with a lapping plate surface for conditioning and texturing the lapping plate surface.

**Figure 10** is a schematic side view of a lapping process performed in accordance with the invention.

**Figure 11** is an enlarged sectional side view of a work piece after being processed by the process of **Figure 10**.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

Referring to **Figures 5 and 6**, there is shown a magnetic recording disc drive, and a magnetic recording disc **2** rotated by drive motor **4** with a hub **6** which is attached to the drive motor **4**. The recording disc **2** comprises a substrate, a metallic magnetic layer, a carbon layer and a polymeric lubricant layer such as perfluoropolyether.

A read/write head or transducer **8** is formed on the trailing end of a carrier, or slider **10**. Head **8** may be an inductive read and write transducer, and sliders may be positive or negative air bearing sliders. The slider **10** has a trailing surface **9** and is connected to an actuator **12** by means of a rigid arm **14** and a suspension element **16**. The suspension element **16** provides a bias force which urges the slider **10** toward the surface of the recording disc **2**. During operation of the disc drive, the drive motor **4** rotates the recording disc **2** at a constant speed in the direction of arrow **22**. The actuator **12**, which is typically a linear or rotary motion coil motor, drives the slider **10** in a generally radial direction across the plane of the surface of the recording disc **2** so that the read/write head may access different data tracks on recording disc **2**.

Disc drive systems are widely used to store data and software for computer systems. A disc drive system generally includes a disc storage media mounted on a spindle such that the disc can be rotated, thereby

5 permitting an electronic magnetic head mounted on a  
 moveable arm to read and write information thereon. The  
 electromagnetic head for a disc drive system is usually  
 mounted in a carrier called a slider. The slider serves to  
 support the head and any electrical connections between the  
 head and the rest of the disc drive system. The slider  
 maintains a uniform distance from the surface of the  
 rotating disc to prevent the head from undesirably  
 contacting the disc. This is accomplished by incorporating  
 10 aerodynamic features into the slider which cause the slider  
 to glide above the disc surface over the moving air. The  
 slider contact surface is finely finished and polished in  
 order to achieve the aerodynamic requirements for  
 utilization in ABS applications. In order to meet  
 increasing demands for more and more data storage capacity,  
 slider fabrication and ABS surface finishing must be  
 improved. Lapping and polishing methodology as well as the  
 texturing, conditioning, and refurbishing of lapping plates  
 surface must be developed which enhance lapping  
 20 processability of air bearing surface features.

25 The cross-sectional view of **Figure 7** shows the  
 utilization of an improved lapping plate **24**, in lapping  
 contact with a slider ABS surface **26**. The lapping process  
 utilizes an abrasive-free slurry **28** comprising various  
 fluid elements including ethylene glycol and sodium  
 citrate. The glycols provide lubrication for the lapping  
 process while the sodium citrate materials provide a  
 surfactant effect which enhances the lubrication  
 30 characteristics of the glycols. Slurry **28** is preferably

provided through a spray nozzle 30 connected to and sourced by a free mixed slurry container (not shown).

**Figure 8** is an enlarged cross-sectional view of the area of lapping contact of the lapping plate 24 and slider ABS surface 26. The enlarged side view presents the lapping plate 24 having grooves 32 for providing quality lapped ABS surfaces which are substantially scratch free.

The top view of **Figure 9** shows a lapping plate 36 contacted by a conditioning ring 38 with the relative rotational kinetics of the conditioning ring shown by arrow 40 and the lapping plate rotational direction shown by arrow 42. The conditioning ring 38 is positioned by lever arm 44 having a drive head 46 for producing the rotation of the conditioning ring 38. The lapping plate 36 shows various grooves formed in configurations of pericycloids, epicycloids, hypocycloids, and circles 48. The conditioning ring 38 has an embedded diamond layer or other hard abrasive particles held by hard bound materials such as nickel-plating or similar surfaces so that the particles cannot be removed from the ring during the conditioning process.

In the prior art, lapping plates incorporated grooves formed between the working surface areas in which an abrasive such as diamond particles was embedded in a metallic coat. The grooves were utilized to sweep beneath the work pieces to remove abrasive particles as the abrasive disc rotated. Problems with such grooved lapping plates include excessive width and depth of grooves or

uncontrolled groove dimensions which allow the abrasive particles if presented in a slurry to locate in such excessive grooves and lose their functionality for further abrasive action. Further, these undesired, oversized grooves provide a surface discontinuity that is too severe for small work pieces. Refurbishment of these lapping surfaces required removal of the old grooves and then forming new grooves in them, which requires additional time and expense.

In addition to designed groove geometry, the number of grooves on the lapping plate surface can provide a high percentage of lapping surface engagement. The lapping plate surface grooves interrupt the planarity of the lapping surface to reduce the hydrodynamic film from the slurry, thereby permitting the work piece to interact more intimately with the lapping plate. This feature substantially reduces hydroplaning. The result of the precision grooving is increased lapping rates, particularly as compared to the expected rate for a similar area provided with grooves having undesired geometry.

The lapping plate is rotated from about 20 to about 100 RPMs with the conditioning ring rotating in the same direction of rotation as that of the lapping plate, but only at about 0.5 to about 0.9 of the RPMs of the lapping plate. Pressure contact of the conditioning ring with the lapping plate ranges from about 2 to about 15 psi with the conditioning ring containing abrasive particles such as diamond particles of about 80 to 320 micron particle size with about 160 microns as an average working particle

abrasive size. Kinetics of the lapping plate and conditioning ring relationship provide geometry and severity of the grooves including peaks to valleys. These lapping plates are suitable for lapping polishing slider ABS surfaces and any other surface requiring precision lapping and polishing utilizing a soft material lapping plate. During the conditioning and texturing of the lapping plate, the abrasive particles utilized by the conditioning ring are hard mounted in materials which do not release the particles. Thus, the process produces lapping plate grooving without any foreign contamination or residue buildup.

The lapping plate is considered a soft lapping plate surface and is comprised of about 97.5 percent tin compounded with various other materials. The textured lapping plate surface is produced with grooves comprising approximately 0 to 5 % of the lapping plate surface. Various grooved profiles are generated by the relative RPM motions of the lapping plate and conditioning ring. The grooves have different angles of grain attached which produce and control relative direction of lapping when utilizing the lapping plate surface against a subject surface to be lapped and polished.

Referring now to **Figures 10 and 11**, a lapping process utilizing oscillatory or rotary motion of a slider body or workpiece **51** across either a rotating or oscillating lapping plate **36** provides a random motion of workpiece **51** relative to lapping plate **36**, and randomizes plate imperfections across the head surface of work piece **51**



during the course of lapping. During the lapping process, work piece 51 is supported such that its air bearing surface 57 is exposed. The motion of the grooved, non-abrasive lapping plate 36 is typically transverse to or across the magnetic head elements 55 embedded in and exposed at the slider air bearing surface 57. A non-abrasive liquid or slurry is dispensed between lapping plate 36 and air bearing surface 57. In magnetic head applications, the electrical components 55 exposed at air bearing surface 57 are made of relatively softer, ductile materials. However, without the presence of abrasive particles either in lapping plate 36 or in the liquid between lapping plate 36 and work piece 51, the electrically active components 55 are not scratched or smeared into the other components during lapping. Instead, components 55 are lapped such that they are substantially uniform in dimension relative to the air bearing surface 57, as shown in Figure 11. Since there are no abrasive particles present, air bearing surface 57 is lapped solely by grooves 48. After lapping and/or polishing, a protective coating may be subsequently applied to air bearing surface 57.

The invention has several advantages including the ability to allow various recession/protrusion targets to be precisely lapped with improved surface finish and poletip/sensor cleanness. No abrasive particles are used for material removal during the critical step of the process. Since the lapping plate is harder than the targets but softer than the ABS itself, it is the microtexture of the lapping plate that removes material

form the target, and not from the ABS. The lapping plates may be selected to target various elements of the workpiece including the substrate, poletips, and alumina undercoat or overcoat. Thus, processing work pieces in accordance with the present invention avoids electrical shorts and degraded head performance.

While the invention has been shown or described in only some of its forms, it should be apparent to those skilled in the art that it is not so limited, but is susceptible to various changes without departing from the scope of the invention.

## CLAIMS

## What is claimed is:

1 1. A method of lapping an air bearing surface to provide  
2 a desired surface dimension, comprising:

3 (a) providing a non-abrasive lapping plate with a  
4 plurality of grooves, and a magnetic transducer having an  
5 air bearing surface with electrical components embedded  
6 therein;

(b) supporting the magnetic transducer such that the  
air bearing surface is exposed;

(c) dispensing a non-abrasive liquid between the air  
bearing surface and the lapping plate; and

(d) contacting the air bearing surface with the  
lapping plate such that the air bearing surface is lapped  
solely by the grooves in the lapping plate, and wherein the  
electrical components are lapped such that they are  
substantially uniform in dimension relative to the air  
bearing surface.

1 2. The method of claim 1 wherein step (d) comprises  
2 rotating the lapping plate relative to the air bearing  
3 surface.

1 3. The method of claim 1 wherein step (a) comprises  
2 forming the grooves in the lapping plate in configurations  
3 of pericycloids, epicycloids, hypocycloids, and circles.

1 4. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of  
2 interrupting a planarity of a lapping surface of the  
3 lapping plate with the grooves in the lapping plate surface  
4 such that a high percentage of lapping surface engagement  
5 is provided by the grooves to reduce a hydrodynamic film  
6 from the liquid.

1 5. The method of claim 1 wherein step (a) comprises  
2 providing the grooves in approximately 0 to 5 % of a  
3 surface of the lapping plate.  
4  
5  
6

1           6.    A lapping plate for lapping a workpiece having an air  
2           bearing surface with electrical components embedded therein  
3           to provide a desired surface dimension thereof, comprising:

4                a non-abrasive lapping plate having a lapping surface  
5           with a plurality of grooves therein, wherein when a non-  
6           abrasive liquid is dispensed between an air bearing surface  
7           of a workpiece and the lapping plate, the lapping plate  
8           contacts the air bearing surface such that the air bearing  
9           surface is lapped solely by the grooves in the lapping  
10          plate, and wherein electrical components embedded within  
11          the air bearing surface are lapped such that they are  
12          substantially uniform in dimension relative to the air  
13          bearing surface.

14           7.    The lapping plate of claim 6 wherein the grooves in  
15           the lapping plate are in configurations of pericycloids,  
16           epicycloids, hypocycloids, and circles.

17           8.    The lapping plate of claim 6 wherein a planarity of  
18           the lapping surface of the lapping plate is interrupted  
19           with the grooves such that a high percentage of lapping  
20           surface engagement is provided by the grooves to reduce a  
21           hydrodynamic film from the liquid.

22           9.    The lapping plate of claim 6 wherein the grooves  
23           comprise approximately 0 to 5 % of the lapping surface of  
24           the lapping plate.

1 10. A system for lapping a workpiece having an air bearing  
2 surface with electrical components embedded therein to  
3 provide a desired surface dimension thereof, comprising:

4 a non-abrasive lapping plate having a lapping surface  
5 with a plurality of grooves therein;

6 a support structure for supporting a workpiece such  
7 that an air bearing surface thereof is exposed;

8 a non-abrasive liquid; and wherein

9 when the non-abrasive liquid is dispensed between the  
10 air bearing surface and the lapping plate, the lapping  
11 plate contacts the air bearing surface such that the air  
12 bearing surface is lapped solely by the grooves in the  
13 lapping plate, and wherein the electrical components of the  
14 air bearing surface are lapped such that they are  
15 substantially uniform in dimension relative to the air  
16 bearing surface.

1 11. The system of claim 10 wherein the grooves in the  
2 lapping plate are in configurations of pericycloids,  
3 epicycloids, hypocycloids, and circles.

1 12. The system of claim 10 wherein a planarity of the  
2 lapping surface of the lapping plate is interrupted with  
3 the grooves such that a high percentage of lapping surface  
4 engagement is provided by the grooves to reduce a  
5 hydrodynamic film from the liquid.

1           13. The system of claim 10 wherein the grooves comprise  
2           approximately 0 to 5 % of the lapping surface of the  
3           lapping plate.

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

The present invention provides a lapping method utilizing textured and conditioned lapping plates which are most suitable for finishing magnetic heads resulting in improved surface quality less sensitivity to electrical shorts due to smears and reduced surface height difference between the head elements exposed at the slider air bearing surface. The lapping process can proceed in a succession of steps in which a rough lapping phase is followed by a polishing phase that maintains the same mechanical motion between the work piece and lapping plate but utilizes only the lapping plate without abrasives of any kind to polish the work piece surface, and to clean up any deep textured marks resulting from the diamond slurry phase. A conductive liquid is utilized to provide lubrication and to minimize static charge. The lapping process begins with a specifically textured and conditioned lapping plate having no abrasive particles embedded therein or in the slurry. The textured lapping plate grooves lap and polish the ABS surface. Such use of the specifically and controlled grooved lapping plate along with a slurry provides versatility of operation for lapping and polishing of the ABS surfaces and other surfaces which requires soft lapping plate surface materials.





**Fig. 3**  
**(Prior Art)**

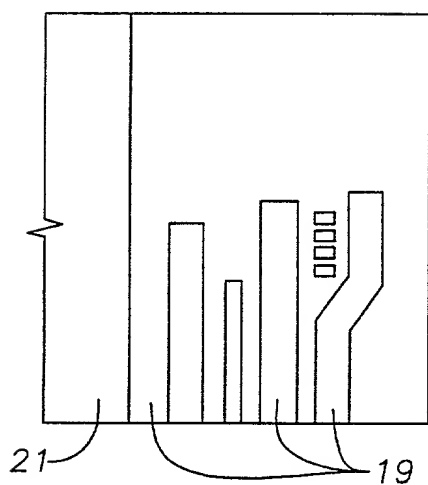
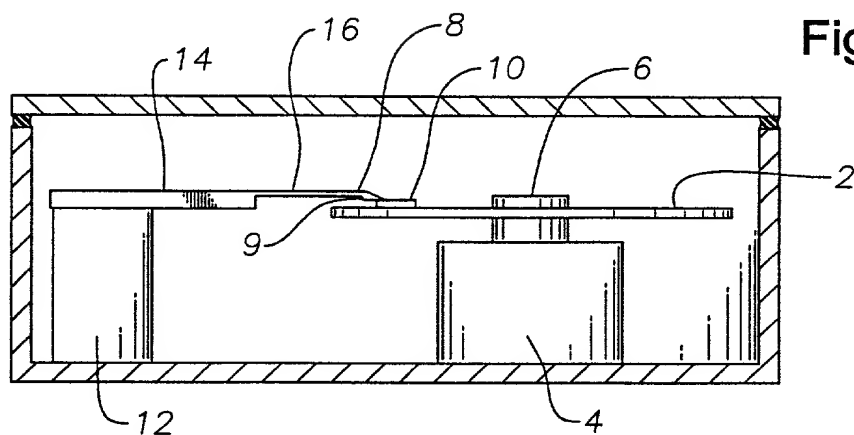
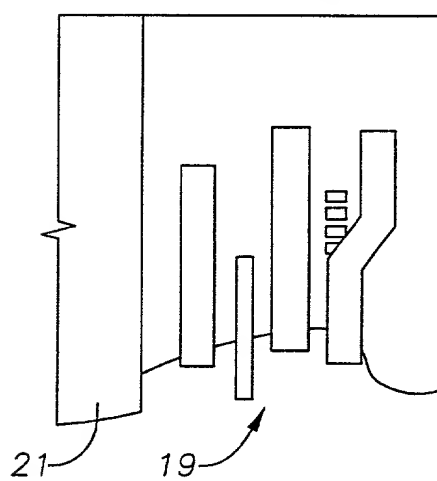


Fig. 4  
(Prior Art)



**Fig. 5**

Fig. 6

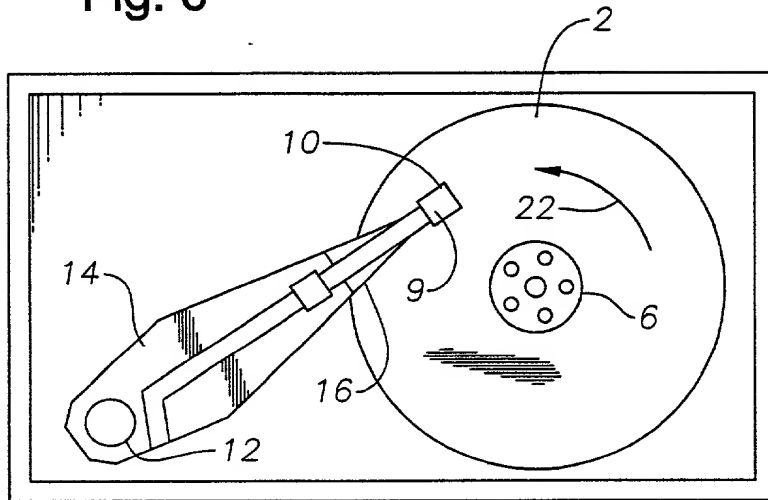


Fig. 7

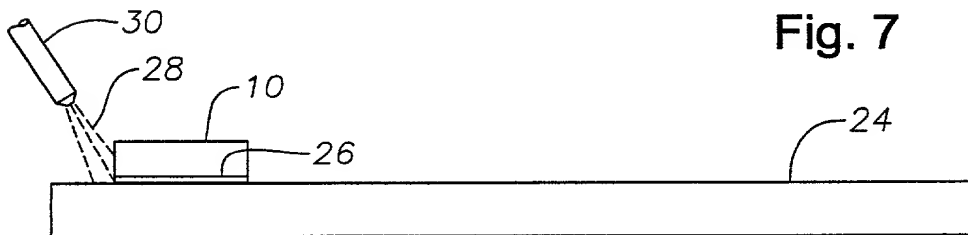
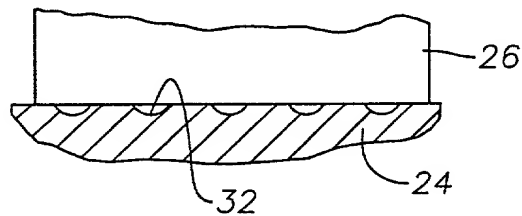


Fig. 8



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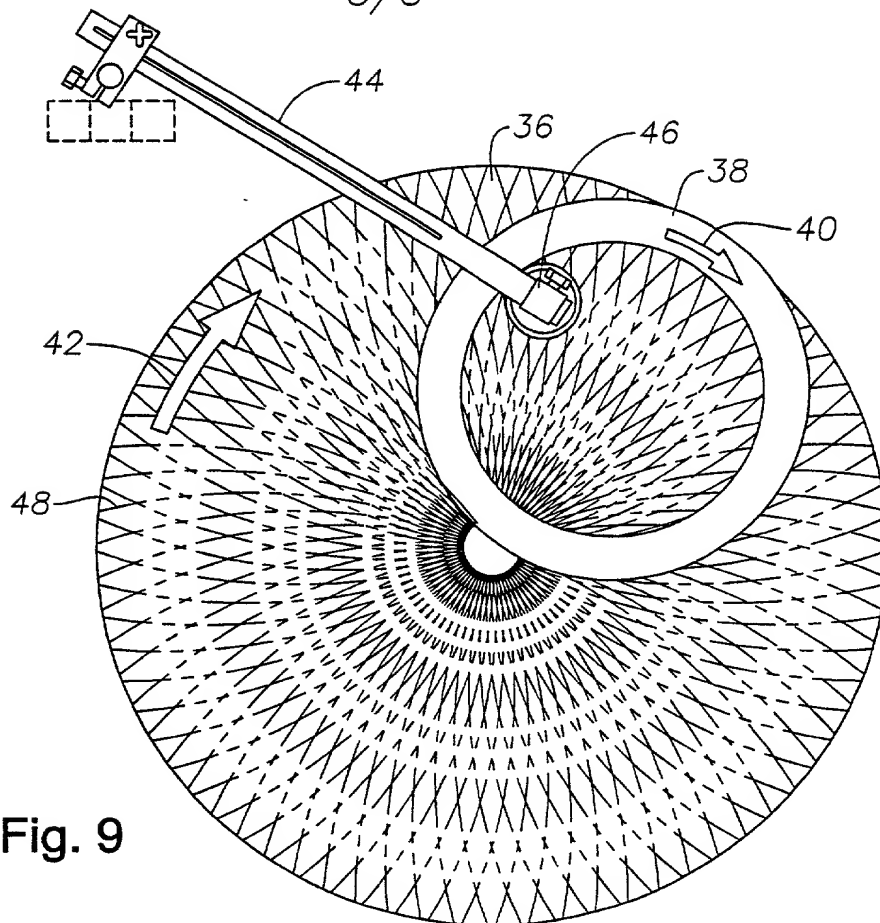


Fig. 9

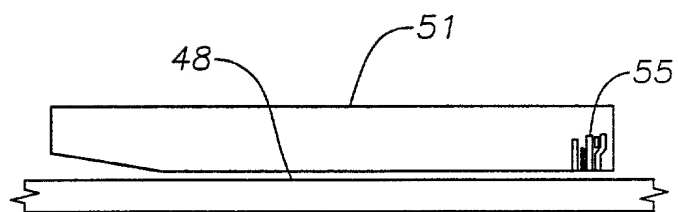
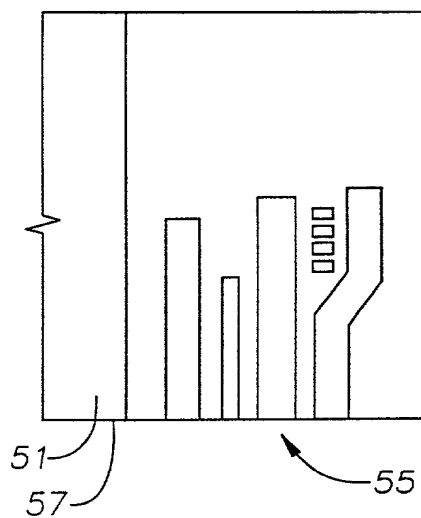


Fig. 10

Fig. 11



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**DECLARATION AND POWER OF ATTORNEY FOR  
PATENT APPLICATION**

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated below next to my name;

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled

**APPARATUS AND METHOD FOR PRECISE LAPPING OF RECESSED AND  
PROTRUDING ELEMENTS IN A WORKPIECE**

the specification of which (check one)

X is attached hereto.

\_\_\_\_\_ was filed on \_\_\_\_\_  
as Application Serial No. \_\_\_\_\_  
and was amended on \_\_\_\_\_  
(if applicable)

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment referred to above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to the patentability of this application in accordance with Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, §1.56.

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under Title 35, United States Code, §119 of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate listed below and have also identified below any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed:

Prior Foreign Application(s): Priority Claimed

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No  
(Number) (Country) (Day/Month/Year)

I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code, §120 of any United States application(s) listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of Title 35, United States Code, §112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose information material to the patentability of this application as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, §1.56 which occurred between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT international filing date of this application:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Application Serial #) (Filing Date) (Status)

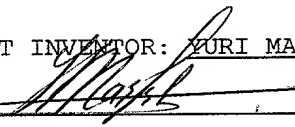
I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

POWER OF ATTORNEY: As a named inventor, I hereby appoint the following attorneys and/or agents to prosecute this application and transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith.

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